

Abstain Altogether

Editor's Pick. Written by Connor Boyack.

I fault nobody who abstains from voting.

Voting is largely a corrupt process whereby people hope to be in a majority that can impose their will on the minority.

As Lysander Spooner once observed, defensive voting is justified as a way to minimize the burden placed upon the individual: supporting the candidate who will vote for the least taxes, regulations, etc.; voting against a bond that would raise the person's taxes; or objecting to amendments to the Constitution or statute that would further infringe upon one's rights.

Sadly, most treat the process as a popularity contest and believe that a majority vote gives them a "mandate from the masses" to do as they please. But there is no virtue in majoritarianism. There is no special power conferred by having received more votes (out of the few eligible voters who actually participate in the process). A mandate from the voters, such as it is, is not inherently cloaked with legitimacy merely because many people want it.

Even worse, many who do vote believe that is the summum bonum of civic duty—that once the ballot is cast, the person can go back to their business and leave the politicking to the politicians. They fall asleep and refuse to actively fight for the freedoms they claim to enjoy.

Voting is largely a charade. It offers a superficial claim of respectability while masking the substantive effect—the ritualization of the democratic tyranny of the majority (of those who actually vote). It appeases our minds and satisfies our notion of what modern patriotism involves.

And some of us even get a sticker to take an Instagram of to provide us the social credibility we desire for the day.

Vote—that's all well and good. (Our taxpayer dollars are being used to show you commercials, billboards, and other advertisements suggesting you should.) Just don't use the opportunity to support politicians or policies that will steal from and harm your neighbor in pursuit of an idea you think is important.

Of course, that may require you abstain altogether.

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